



# Bus industry, usage, economic activity and environmental statistics: Great Britain

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## Main findings

- In 2011 there were 6,073 bus and coach **businesses** in the UK and 88% of these were small businesses employing less than 50 people.
- The **economic contribution** of the bus and coach industry was valued at £5.3 billion in 2011, down 17% from 2010.
- The **number of licensed buses and coaches** continues to decline, however the number of new licenses in 2012 was slightly higher than 2011 driven by a 22% increase in new minibus registrations.
- The main **purpose** for travelling by bus was for shopping. This was 26% of all bus trips.
- Women are more likely to travel by bus than men, taking an average of 69 trips per person in 2012 compared to 53 trips for men.
- People aged 17-20 take the most trips by bus. 13% of all trips made by people in this age bracket were by bus.
- Of those in employment in 2011, 7% **travel to work** by bus; the number of people travelling to work by bus has declined in almost all regions since the 2001 census, except in London which showed a 26% increase.
- The **accident rate** for buses is more than twice as high as the rate for all vehicles (301 per billion vehicle miles compared to 125 for all vehicles). However as a passenger bus travel is the third safest mode, with half the number of passengers killed or seriously injured per billion miles compared to car passengers.
- **Road traffic** figures for buses and coaches are the lowest since 1988 at 2.7 billion vehicle miles in 2012.
- The amount of **greenhouse gases** emitted by the bus and coach industry remained constant between 2009 and 2010 whilst all other air pollutants decreased, continuing the trend of the last 20 years.

## About these statistics

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This release summarises a number of broad economic, environmental and safety statistics about the bus and coach industry.

Because these statistics are collated from a number of sources they relate to England, England and Wales, the UK or Great Britain, this is specified early in each section.

## The bus industry

### Bus and coach businesses

In 2011 there were 6,073 bus and coach businesses operating across the UK. A large majority (88%) of these are small businesses employing less than 50 people. In 2011-12 there were 9,514 licensed bus and coach operators in Great Britain, largely consistent with the 2010-11 total of 9,503. The difference between 'businesses' and 'licensed operators' could be businesses with a license to use buses and coaches that do not class as a bus or coach business, for example a hotel that runs a coach service to and from the airport.

In total, the bus and coach industry employed 182,400 people in 2011, 11% less than 2010.

In 2011 the bus and coach industry's total contribution to the UK economy was valued at £5.3billion, a decrease of 17% from 2010.

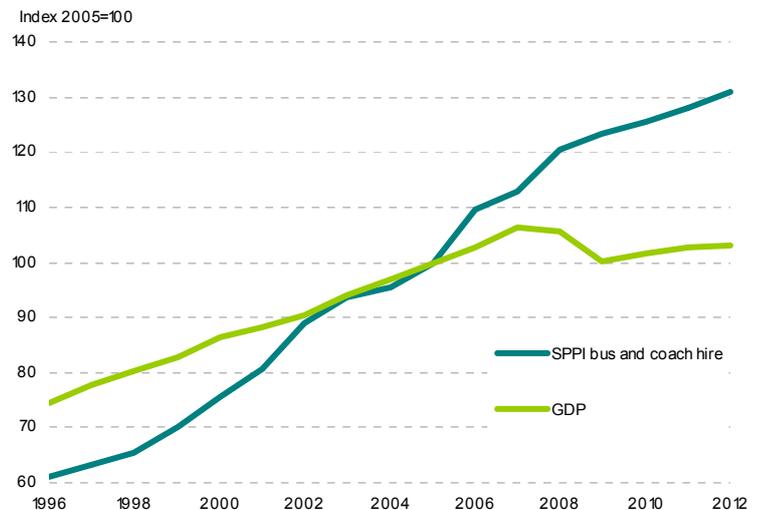
### Service Producer Price Index

The Service Producer Price (SPP) Index captures quarterly and annual changes in the price received for services provided by UK businesses to other UK businesses and Government.

The SPP Index for the 'bus and coach hire' industry were slightly higher in 2012 compared to 2011 (2.3%), but 30% higher than in 2005, meaning that bus and coach hire prices are continuing to rise.

However, comparing the first two quarters of 2013 with the first two quarters of 2012 shows that the rate of price increase is slowing (from 2.6% to 0.8% in the first quarter, and from 2.2% to 0.2% in the second).

**SPPI of bus and coach hire industry: (index 2005=100), United Kingdom, annually from 1996 [table BUS9901a]**



- Industry figures are taken from the People 1<sup>st</sup> ['State of the Nation 2013 Passenger Transport and Travel report'](#). Who produce a summary of the [bus and coach](#) industry statistics that is available for free online.
- Number of licensed bus and coach operators taken from the [traffic commissioners annual reports](#).
- More detailed [SPPI](#) figures can be found on the Office for National Statistics website.

## Employment and unemployment

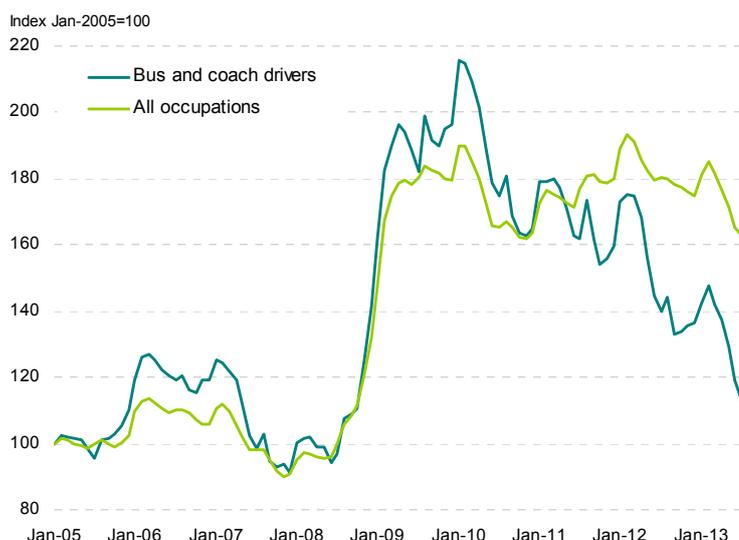
### Employment

The Labour Force Survey estimated that in the UK there were 105,000 bus and coach drivers in 2012 (April-June estimate) compared to 116,000 in 2011. This is the lowest estimate in the past 10 years; previously the lowest was 106,000 in 2008.

The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings found that in 2012, the median number of total paid hours worked (including overtime) by bus and coach drivers was 40.6, this is more than the median for all employees; 37.5 hours.

The average salary of a bus or coach driver in 2012 was £23,889, compared to the national average of £26,500.

### Claimant count totals where usual occupation is bus and coach driver: index 2005=100 [table BUS9901b]



### Claimant Count

The number of people claiming Jobseekers Allowance (claimant count) who listed bus or coach driver as their usual occupation in July 2013 was 1,685; 48% lower than the peak in February 2010 of 3,225. The chart shows the claimant count for people who list bus and coach driver as their usual occupation alongside the total claimant count. Since the start of 2012 the number of bus and coach drivers claiming Jobseekers Allowance has declined faster than the rate for all occupations.

- Unemployment rates were accessed through claimant counts on [Nomisweb.co.uk](http://Nomisweb.co.uk) and employment rates accessed through [The Labour Force Survey](http://The Labour Force Survey) on the Office for National Statistics website.
- The [Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings](http://Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings) table [14.9a](#) shows paid hours worked by occupation.

## Licensed vehicles

### Stock of vehicles

In Great Britain the number of licensed buses and coaches fell from 168,100 in 2011 to 166,300 in 2012. The number has fallen for seven successive years and there are now 7% fewer buses than in 2005.

The distribution across body types was:

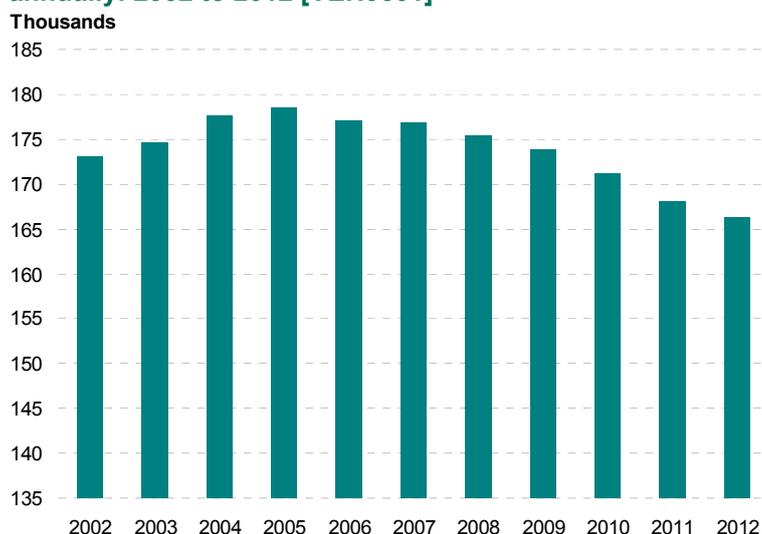
- 93,100 minibuses
- 50,400 single deck buses and coaches
- 21,900 double deck buses and coaches
- 1,000 other

The proportion of double deck buses and coaches has risen gradually for 6 successive years by 15% since 2007.

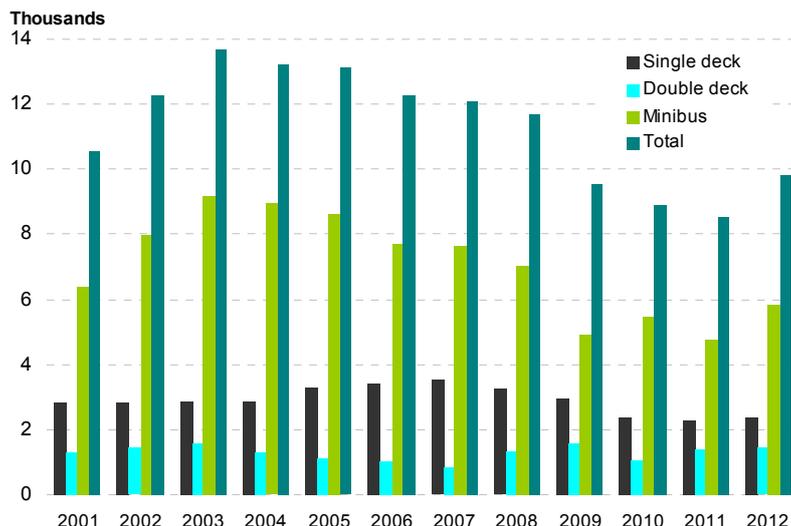
### New bus and coach registrations

New bus and coach registrations in 2012 were slightly higher than in 2011 overall (9,800 compared to 8,500). This is the first increase in new bus and coach registrations for nine years. However the figure is still 28% lower than the peak in 2003 of 13,700 new registrations.

### Total number of licensed buses and coaches, Great Britain, annually: 2002 to 2012 [VEH0601]



## Total number of buses and coaches registered for the first time by body type, Great Britain, annually: 2001 to 2012 [VEH0651]



This increase has been driven by a 22% increase in minibus registrations, while double and single deck registrations have remained relatively constant.

### Unlicensed buses and coaches

Buses have had the lowest rate of unlicensed vehicles in traffic compared to other tax classes for the past 4 years (2007-2011); in 2011 the rate for all vehicles was 0.7, for buses it was 0.1.

- Detailed vehicle statistics are available online as part of the [vehicle licensing series](#).
- Table [VEH0601](#) shows licensed buses and coaches by body type.
- Table [VEH0651](#) shows buses and coaches registered for the first time by body type.

## Bus Use

### The National Travel Survey

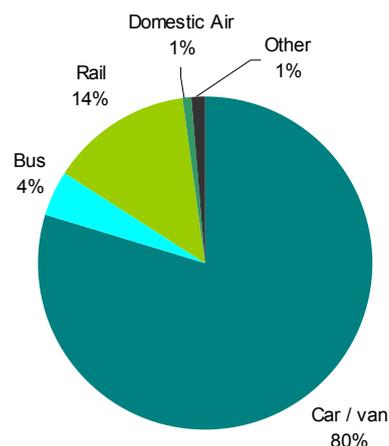
In Great Britain, local and non-local buses account for 6 % of trips. This represents a greater proportion than surface rail and underground (3%). However due to the relatively short distances that local buses cover, they account for 5% of the total distance travelled whereas rail accounts for 9%.

The main purpose for travelling by local bus was for shopping, at 26% of all bus journeys, but commuting trips account for the greatest passenger distance travelled on local buses (24%). Both metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas<sup>1</sup> follow the national trend; with 27% and 29% of trips being for the purpose of shopping respectively. However, in London commuting accounts for the highest number of trips (28%), with shopping second (19%) [table BUS9902].

### Long distance trips of 50+ miles

The highest proportion of bus and coach journeys occur in the 250-350 miles range (10% of the total trips) and the lowest in the 50-75 miles range (3% of total trips).

### All long distance trips (of 50+ miles) by main mode: Great Britain, 2008 to 2012 combined



<sup>1</sup>Metropolitan areas cover the six former metropolitan counties of Merseyside, Greater Manchester, South Yorkshire, Tyne and Wear, West Midlands and West Yorkshire and non-metropolitan areas cover the rest of England outside London.

## Gender

Women are more likely to use buses than men, taking an average of 69 trips per year compared to 53 trips for men in 2012. The largest difference in bus use between men and women occurred in non-metropolitan areas (difference of 21 percentage points) and the smallest in London (7 percentage points) (2009-2012).

## Age

Males and females aged 17-20 made more bus journeys than any other age group in 2012, 13% of all trips made by this age group were by bus, the highest proportion out of all the age groups.

Those aged 60 and over had higher bus use than those aged 30-59, reflecting the concessionary travel schemes for older passengers.

## Income

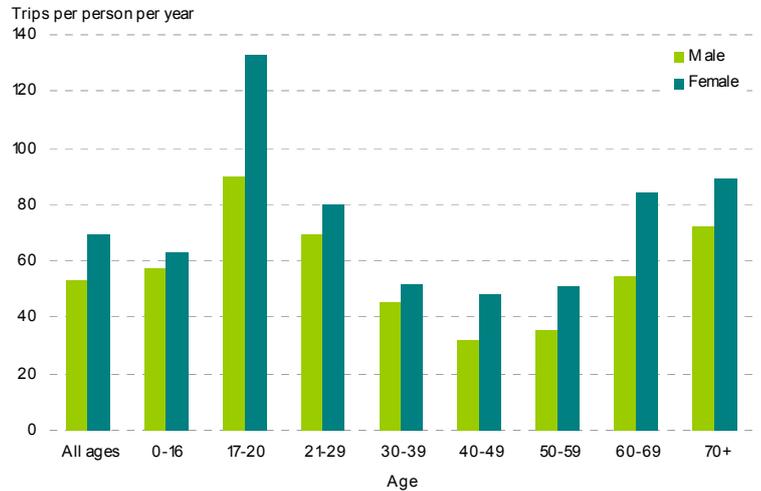
Those in the lowest household income group (<£25,000) make the most bus journeys, accounting for over half of all bus journeys in GB (54%) across 2009-2012. The difference in the percentage of bus journeys made by the lowest and highest income groups was least in London and most in metropolitan areas. This is possibly a result of good transport links and the congestion charge for driving, which makes public transport more favourable to those with higher incomes in central London [BUS9902].

## Accessibility

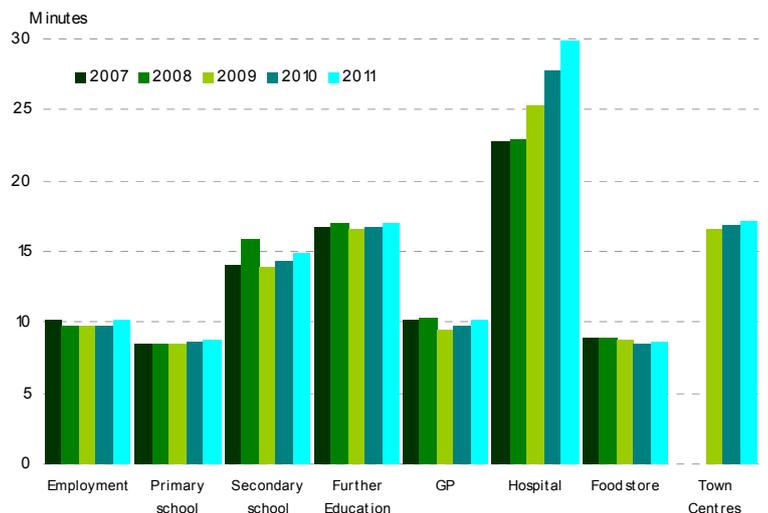
Accessibility statistics provide a measure of the availability of transport to key services in England (employment centres, primary schools, secondary schools, further education institutions, GPs, hospitals, food stores and town centres). Journey times for public transport/walking, cycling and car are reported. As this is on a very local basis, buses account for the majority of the public transport.

Nationally in 2011, for public transport/walking the average minimum travel time across the 7 key services (town centres excluded) was 14 minutes. This was more than double that for cars (6 minutes).

**Average number of bus trips by age and gender: Great Britain, 2012 [BUS9901c].**



**Average minimum travel time (minutes) to key services by public transport/walking: England, 2007-2011**



<sup>2</sup>There are three reasons for this, although changes to transport services explain some of this change it is also due to the removal of some hospitals from the destination dataset and some amalgamations of existing hospital sites.

Regionally public transport figures were lowest in London (10 minutes) and highest for the East of England (16 minutes), presumably due to good public transport networks in London. In contrast car journey times varied very little regionally.

The longest minimum journey time for public transport/walking was 30 minutes to the hospital and the shortest was to primary school and the food store; both 9 minutes. The journey time to the hospital by public transport has increased steadily for the past 4 years<sup>2</sup>.

### Travel to Work

The 2011 census of England and Wales found that, of those in employment, 17% travelled to work by public transport. This is distributed into:

- 7% Bus
- 5% Train
- 4% Underground, tram or light rail

Since the 2001 census, the proportion of those getting to work by bus has declined in almost all areas outside London, whilst London itself has seen a 26% increase. This mirrors a 16% decrease in people driving to work in London while other areas have seen an increase in those driving to work.

Detailed statistical tables are available online from:

- [National Travel Survey](#) table [NTS0303](#) shows average number of trips by mode of transport.
- [NTS0317](#) gives long distance figures, based on 5 years combined from 2008-2012.
- Table BUS9902 gives bus trips by age, gender, household income, car ownership, ticket type and trip purpose for different area types (metropolitan, non-metropolitan and London).
- [Transport accessibility statistics](#) series.
- Census data is available on the Office for National Statistics website.
- The [method of travel to work report](#) has detailed figures on mode of transport to work by region.
- [Road accidents and safety statistics](#) series table [RAS20001](#) gives involvement rates by vehicle type and severity.
- Table [RAS53001](#) contains passenger casualty rates by mode of travel.

## Road and Safety

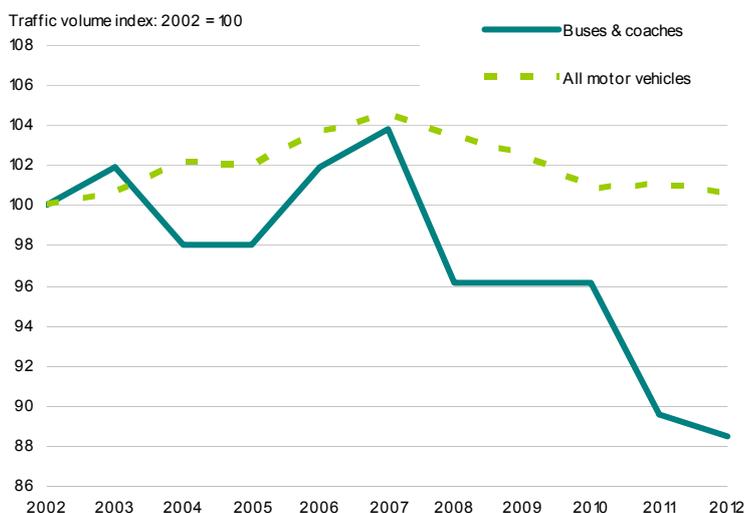
### Road Traffic

The chart on the right shows estimates of Bus and Coach traffic for Great Britain from the Department's National Road Traffic Survey.

In 2012 Bus and Coach traffic was 2.7 billion vehicle miles. This represents a 7% decrease from 2011 and is the lowest figure since 1988.

The proportion of overall traffic that buses and coaches account for has remained roughly constant at 1 or 1.1% since 1986. In 2012 it dropped slightly to 0.9%, the lowest since 1949.

Bus and coach vehicle traffic: Great Britain, 2002-2012



### Accidents

In 2011 in Great Britain, there were 7,138 accidents involving at least one bus or coach, with 9,913 casualties. Of those casualties 75 were fatalities.

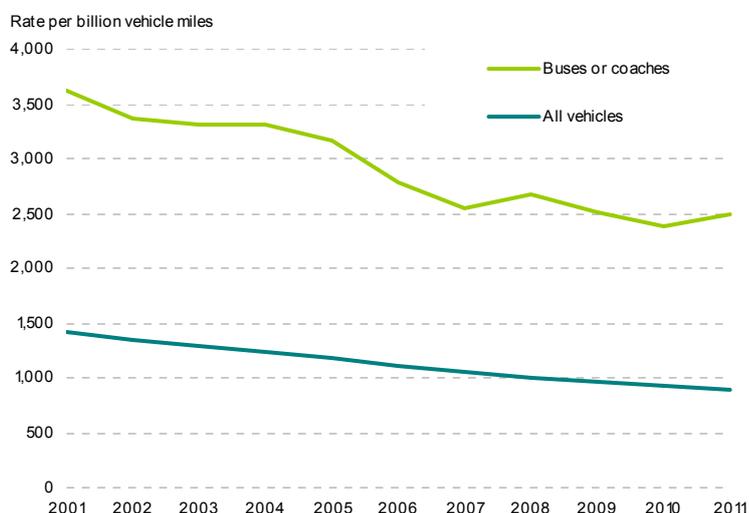
There were around 301 fatal or serious accidents involving buses and coaches per billion vehicle miles in 2011. This is more than twice the rate for all vehicles (125 accidents per billion vehicle miles).

The rate for buses and coaches shows an overall downward trend over the past 10 years but in 2011 the rate increased slightly from 2,391 to 2,494.

In 2011, 7 bus and coach passengers were killed or seriously injured per billion vehicle miles, making bus the third safest mode of passenger travel, after air and rail, with half as many killed or seriously injured as car passengers (14 per billion vehicle miles).

The total bus passenger injuries for 2011 was 139; 11% less than the average from 2001-2011.

### Accident involvement rate of buses and coaches (all severities): Great Britain 2001-2011 [BUS 9901e]



### Emissions

In the UK greenhouse gas emissions from buses and coaches remained constant between 2009 and 2010 at 6% lower than the 2007 peak in emissions (see table below).

Greenhouse gas emissions by transport mode (million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>Total</b>	116.5	116.4	118.7	118.3	119.4	119.8	120.1	121.1	116.7	112.0	112.0
Cars and taxis	76.5	76.1	77.3	75.9	76.3	75.5	75.1	74.5	73.0	70.3	68.0
HGVs and light vans	35.3	35.3	36.1	36.6	37.3	38.4	39.1	40.4	37.7	35.9	38.3
Buses and coaches	4.0	4.0	4.2	4.6	4.5	4.7	4.8	5.0	4.8	4.7	4.7
Motorcycles & mopeds	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6
Other road transport emissions	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.5

The proportion of all domestic emissions accounted for by buses and coaches also remained constant at 1%.

All other recorded air pollutant emissions from buses and coaches (carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, particulates, benzene, 1,3-butadiene, lead, sulphur dioxide) have decreased for 20 successive years from 1990 to 2010.

- [Road traffic statistics](#) are available online, table [TRA0101](#) shows road traffic by vehicle type.
- Detailed emissions statistics can be found online as part of the [Energy and Environment](#) statistics series.
- Table [ENV0201](#) shows greenhouse gas emissions by transport mode.
- Table [ENV0301](#) shows air pollutants by transport mode.

## Background

A quarterly bus statistics release covering local bus passenger journeys and fares and more detailed annual bus statistics, including information on mileage, revenue and costs, and the vehicle fleet are available on the DfT website in the [bus statistics series](#).

This release brings together statistics from multiple sources; these sources are referenced at the end of each section. The data for this publication was extracted on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2013. For the most recent data available follow the links provided.